

HITMAN CASE
SENTENCED

PAGE 4

CINDERELLA
BALLET

PAGE 10

STRIP SEARCHING
JUVENILES

PAGE 5

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EUGENE Weekly



Cultura y Caballos

LATINO HERITAGE
IN LANE COUNTY
HAS A LONG LEGACY

PAGE 6

Photo by Todd Cooper

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contents

FEBRUARY 22 - 29, 2023

- 2 Letters
- 4 News
- 5 Slant
- 6 Mexican Heritage
- 8 Calendar
- 10 Dance
- 11 Savage Love

Photo by Stephanie Urso

BALLET FANTASTIQUE

editorial

EDITOR Camilla Mortensen
CALENDAR EDITOR Brianna Murschel
COPY EDITOR Dan Buckwalter
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR Anita Johnson
ARTS EDITOR EMERITUS Bob Keefer
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Ester Barkai, Dan Bryant, Emerson Brady, Tom Coffin,
Ayisha Elliott, Henry Houston, Will Kennedy, Chandra
LeGue, Rick Levin, Susan Palmer, Taylor Perse, William
Sullivan, John Zerzan
HAPPENING PEOPLE Paul Neevel
INTERNS Melvin Bravo, Faheem Kahn
CATALYST JOURNALISM PROJECT INTERNS Sophia
Cossette, Bentley Freeman, Tristin Hoffman, Emma J
Nelson, Alicia Santiago, Eve Weston, Amelia Winkelman

art department

ART DIRECTOR/PRODUCTION MANAGER
Todd Cooper
GRAPHIC ARTIST Chelsea Lovejoy
TECHNOLOGY/WEBMASTER James Bateman

advertising

DIRECTOR OF ADVERTISING Rob Weiss

business

ACCOUNTANT Kernutt Stokes
DISTRIBUTORS
Eliza Aronson, Bob Becker, Emerson Brady, Mike
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letters

A VOTE FOR STRINGER

I am so honored to see Shanaé Joyce-Stringer as a 2024 mayoral candidate for the city of Eugene. As a lifelong member of this community, I am excited to see a young woman of color enter this race, especially one with so much to offer as mayor. She is educated, relatable and easy to work with. One of her remarkable qualities is her ability to listen to everyone at the table and bring both her head and heart into every discussion. Our first time meeting was summer 2021 at the Juneteenth celebration, where she curated the Elder's Lounge, a space dedicated to honor the African-American elders in the community, many of whom were members of the first families in the area. It's her ability to honor what has been while recognizing there's room for growth in Eugene that assures me she's ready to lead.

Joyce-Stringer sees Eugene's potential to be a city that sets the standard for Oregon and is dedicated to doing the work to make that potential our reality. Eugene has made strides at being inclusive and allowing qualified voices to be heard no matter how they may identify, and for that I am grateful. Our city is brimming with potential, and Joyce-Stringer has what it takes to strengthen our diverse community even more and deliver on important issues that matter to the citizens in every corner of Eugene.

Thank you for your time and attention.

*Lyllye B. Reynolds,
Retired Academic Advisor,
University of Oregon
Springfield*

HOMELESS PROBLEM SOLVING

I read Lynn Porter's letter in *EW* with some interest as it portrays a rather biased view of the homeless situation in

Eugene. I do feel that there need to be answers to help shelter the homeless who have no options but to be homeless. Sadly, this requires the support of those who are homed (through their own substantial daily efforts to be and to remain so).

The money Porter complains that the city doesn't have comes from that population of workers, people who work, who have purchased property and who pay what are fairly high taxes for that "honor." I am one of those people, and I consider myself a rational liberal.

I will say that my sympathy towards the homeless tends to nose dive when I see a camp strewn with trash from "garbage farming" and hear of parks littered with needles from some of the occupants who have chosen drugs as a way of life. It seems that in their own way, a substantial portion of the homeless population is set on "crushing" the sympathy of the working people whom they rely on to pay for services. It is a two way street, and it would be nice to see others doing their part a little better. It would also be nice to hear realistic solutions rather than the call for "forceful protests" — whatever that might actually mean. It certainly doesn't sound like problem solving to me.

*Liam Morris
Eugene*

NO DRUG MOTIVATION

Illegal drugs are highly profitable for the dealers, the police, and the corrections system.

To get rid of the problem, the illegal drugs should be both legal and *free*. Free above all. No motive for production or sales.

Johan Hari's book *Chasing the Scream* is a good read on the subject of ineffective punitive measures, as well as alternatives.

*Karen Carlson
Eugene*

KUDOS TO THE Y

The new Eugene Family YMCA Don Stathos Campus has been open for just short of three months. Apparently, many of you have been waiting to join the Y, since membership grew from 7,079 on Dec. 15 to 13,067 on Feb. 7, and membership is still growing.

For those of us who have been Y members for decades, we remember the Patterson Street site's finicky plumbing, the leaking ceiling in the only group exercise room and all the other ways the staff kept it duct-taped together. But we also knew that the Y is so much more than the physical structure. The Y is for everyone. Its Code of Conduct is: Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility. The Y's dedicated staff brings this every day!

Like any new construction, it's not perfect, there are things to fix and finish. But please participate in the Y's code of conduct with kindness and appreciation. If you want a "free" locker room towel and other fancy amenities, there are lots of more expensive options out there for you.

For those of you who may not know everything our Y does for our community, I'll list just a few. The Y is the largest childcare provider in Lane County with services both on and off site. The Y offers a Diabetes Prevention program, a full aquatics center, Livestrong for Cancer patients, and an extensive number of youth programs, walking and running clubs, monthly potlucks for seniors, in addition to everything else offered on campus. Check out all the Y does for our community at EugeneYmca.org.

With gratitude to the Eugene Family YMCA and its dedicated staff, thank you.

*Duane Funk
Eugene*

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for salmon & trout?
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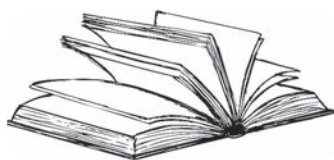
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LCOG Accepting Budget Committee Applications

Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) is seeking volunteers to serve on the LCOG Budget Committee. Appointments will be for a three-year term.

It is anticipated that the committee will meet three to four times a year. The first meeting will be held in April 2024 on a date to be determined by the committee. This meeting should last less than 3 hours and will be held during the evening.

There will be two to three additional meetings in April and May.

The application is available online at www.lcog.org
from LCOG, 859 Willamette Street, Suite 500, Eugene, OR 97401
or, by calling 541-682-4006

Completed applications must be received by 5:00 p.m., Thursday, March 7, 2024.

MERKLEY FOR PREZ

You want to escape from the nightmare of Genocide Joe vs. Benito Trump in November? You have a real possibility: work to persuade Oregon's own Sen. Jeff Merkley to challenge Biden in the (not even yet imagined) primary for the Democratic nomination. It's the hope, not yet the chance.

Stephen Slater
Eugene

BENEFIT OF DOUBT FOR DEY

Like the editors of EW, I know none of the particulars regarding alleged retaliation and discrimination by Andy Dey against a grade school teacher, which is apparently being treated currently as an in-house matter rather than as a matter of public opinion, as it initially should be, with the decisions becoming public in due course.

I do know Dey, however, having had the privilege of helping him teach physics to eighth graders about 2005 and having served as a volunteer at South Eugene High School while he was principal there years later. He is a very bright guy, honest and devoted to individual students and teachers, though not particularly averse to tackling controversy. I am giving him the benefit of doubt till I hear significant evidence to the contrary. I just wonder why a guy so smart would take on the task of trying to herd the 4J school system?

Tom Bettman
Eugene

NAILING HOMELESSNESS

Lynn Porter pretty much nailed the issue of Eugene homelessness in his letter last week.

His mention of the city's aversion to self-managed tent camps brought up memories of Nathan Showers and Whoville, which was a self-managed tent camp set up on a (still) vacant lot on Franklin Boulevard. It had room for porta-potties, a dumpster, a communal kitchen, as well as numerous tents. It hosted an open house with Kitty Piercy and other city officials in attendance.

Shortly after the open house, the camp was cleared in a massive police operation on (ironically) the same day the city was unveiling the new Washington Jefferson Skatepark.

Showers and his partner Tracy Forest are now operating Nightingale Hosted Shelters on Hilyard Street, showing what can be accomplished with a little space and good management.

Steve Hiatt
Eugene

SUPPORT OUR LOCAL HOME CARE NURSES

Our local PeaceHealth home health and hospice (home care) nurses are on strike. They are asking to be paid the same as the hospital nurses. Equal pay across hospital and home care units is standard practice across all Peace-

Health Northwest programs.

Hospital and home care nurses have the same licensing requirements, yet PeaceHealth is paying our local home care nurses less, claiming they are worth less.

When my mother suffered a series of strokes several years ago, our family worked with amazing, equally skilled nursing teams at the hospital and at home.

So, why less compensation now?

Home care nursing is less profitable to PeaceHealth, and Liz Dunne, PeaceHealth CEO, wants to maintain her annual compensation of over \$6 million.

Our local home care nurses have been in contract negotiations with PeaceHealth for over a year. Is PeaceHealth trying to eliminate their program as a test case for further reductions across the region? Sister Monica would be appalled.

The corporatization of health care must end. Let's end it here.

To support these nurses, their patients and their families, please visit the Oregon Nurses Association's website: RespectOurNurses.com.

Laurie Ehlhardt Powell
Eugene

'VENTILATION SHUTDOWN'

Were you aware it is perfectly legal in Oregon to subject certain animals to inhumane and even tortuous treatment?

Hyperbole, you say? Recently in Oregon over 750,000 chickens were killed (euthanized would be a gross misuse of the English language) by way of what the state vet calls "ventilation shutdown." As you may know, today's factory chicken farms cram thousands of birds into rearing buildings. The state in response to the avian flu epidemic allowed growers to shut down the ventilation systems in these buildings and introduce some heat so that the birds slowly die of heatstroke. These animals are alive and suffering for hours before they succumb.

"Well this had to be done due to the bird flu" some might say. Well no, Oregon is only one of five states that allows this arcane practice. The others mandate more humane methods for dealing with such situations. Please contact your state government reps.

Dan Dizney
Eugene

PRIVATE EQUITY HEALTH CARE

Health care in America is a mess for many reasons. It's a crazy quilt of many types of coverage, but perhaps the major reason is that it is an increasingly for-profit system. Private equity investors spent more than \$200 billion on health care acquisitions in 2021 alone, and \$1 trillion in the past decade.

In recent years both the type of investors and how they operate have changed. The firms investing in health care now are far more likely to be man-

aging funds for large groups of wealthy individuals or institutions. They know little about health care and are in the game strictly for profit. They may borrow the money to buy a health care asset, using the asset itself as collateral; replace experienced professionals with younger, cheaper staff; or simply raise prices. However, they do it, their primary goal is to make as large a profit as possible. Their duty is to their investors not to their patients.

What does this mean for patients? It's not good. A study led by Harvard

Medical School researchers has shown that patients are up to 25 percent more likely to fall or get a new infection during their stay in a hospital that has been acquired by a private equity firm.

Jo Alexander
Corvallis

Letters Policy:

We welcome letters on all topics and will print as many as space allows, with priority given to timely local issues. Limit length to 250 words and include your address and phone number to confirm identity. Email to letters@eugeneweekly.com and find more letters at EugeneWeekly.com.

Jonesin' Crossword

BY MATT JONES
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Across

1. "Billions & Billions" author Carl
6. Return-postage enclosures, for short
11. What Wednesday's child is full of
14. Act out
15. Origami bird
16. Airline's base
17. Southern restaurant chain with an "Index" indicating the severity of a storm
19. Royal sphere
20. Card game with four different colors
21. Hurry along
22. Crony
24. Role
26. Bob Saget's bailiwick, on a show he hosted from 1990-1997
30. Sweater material
32. Pesto bit
33. Super Bowl LVIII halftime headliner
36. Ceiling fixture
37. "Based ___ true story"
38. Spectacular play in football or baseball
43. Suffix after mountain
44. Bad spell
45. Angler's basket
46. Takes things easy
49. 1990s puzzle game set in an island world
51. A-1, for one
53. Adoption org. of sorts
57. "Succession" surname
58. Relative by marriage
60. "Maggie May" singer Stewart
61. Memorable period
63. One of the bald Stooges
66. Car wash appliance, briefly
67. Completely wiped out
68. Lemon section
69. ___ of Horus (Egyptian symbol)
70. Malory's "Le ___ d'Arthur"
71. Serious

Down

1. Close, as a hole or a deal
2. Refrigerator manufacturer
3. Attempt to get
4. Anti-moonshine org.
5. Wilco lead guitarist ___ Cline
6. Superintendent's responsibility
7. "Get ___!"
8. Relative of a skillet
9. Dinner centerpiece?
10. Enter through the cracks
11. Oval on a staff
12. Possessive pronoun
13. Subside
18. Parrot
23. Gator or Power follower
25. Affectedly elegant
27. Rhymes of the "Mission: Impossible" movies
28. 1/16 of a pound
29. "60 Minutes" correspondent Lesley
31. "Grey's Anatomy" locales
33. Hot desking sharers
34. Cake variety at a supermarket bakery
35. Belmont event
36. Predicament
39. In said fashion
40. Handy person
41. Hypo measurements
39. In said fashion
40. Handy person
41. Hypo measurements
42. Newssite section
47. Former CollegeHumor cast member ___ Yang
48. Overhead stadium equipment
49. Rap pioneer with a 2004 Grammy nomination for "Ride Wit Me"
50. 33 Across hit
52. Like catacombs, usually
54. "The Devil Wears ___"
55. Queen Elizabeth's preferred dog breed
56. Thrown in
59. Astonishes
61. The night before
62. Manzarek of The Doors
64. "Teach ___ Fly" (2009 single for Wiz Khalifa)
65. ___ Bandits ("Home Alone" burglars)

ANSWERS TO LAST PUZZLE

RITE MAD MATTEL
EGAL OSE ELOISE
DULLACHE TEXACO
TAKETH MAXI
ANE VANILLACOKE
GARB ETAS SET
ORCAS HASHES
UMBRELLACOMPANY
SEANCE ZEPPO
ANI NOOB TIDY
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ACHT EEARVIN
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Place numbers 1-9 so that each row, column and 3x3 square has each number only once.

	7						4	
3	4			8			9	1
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			2		3			
6	2			7			1	8
	9						6	

Light Sentence for Attempt to Hire a Hitman

LANE COUNTY BUSINESSMAN SENTENCED TO TWO YEARS AFTER TRYING TO HIRE SOMEONE TO KILL HIS WIFE

By Melvin Bravo and Emerson Brady

On Jan. 30, Lane County Circuit Court sentenced former Creswell businessman John Clarke to just two years in prison — with credit for the year he spent in jail awaiting trial and a 36-month probation period — after he pleaded guilty to soliciting a hitman to try to kill his then wife.

Lane County deputies arrested him Feb. 7, 2023, after the man he tried to hire to kill Mandy Clarke tipped off the police.

The night after John Clarke's arrest, police told Mandy Clarke that he was in the process of writing a confession. On Feb. 8, 2023, she filed for a restraining order against him, and several days later, on Feb. 14, she filed for divorce.

Police discovered texts from a mistress on John Clarke's phone, an affair he was having for two and half years with a woman who was an employee at Oregon West Enterprises, the RV dealership that John and Mandy Clarke co-owned. Mandy Clarke is now the sole owner.

According to court records, John Clarke told the hitman that his wife wanted to buy at least one "million dollar horse" and that this was a "concern to him, his business, the inheritance his children would get and may cause 26 of his employees to lose their jobs."

Mandy Clarke says the assertion she was going to buy a million dollar horse was never true. She has always rescued "at risk" horses, and was looking to buy a quality horse for the first time. The Friesian horse she owns now is her only horse, and the horse was purchased for less than \$50,000 after John's arrest.

"I can't put myself in his brain. I don't know what his motivations were," Mandy Clarke says. "And I think, what about our lives wasn't good enough?"

John and Mandy Clarke were high school sweethearts. "He was my first kiss. The only man I'd ever been with. He was my whole world," Mandy Clarke says. She says the two married young, had two kids and built a life together in Creswell running the RV dealership.

Mandy Clarke says that John had never shown signs of aggression and had "never so much as called me a bitch." She adds that they rarely fought or argued.

She says she did notice a shift in his demeanor after she fell into the river near their house in fall 2022. John Clarke was the only witness to this incident.

The incident left Mandy Clarke in the ICU on a ventilator. She suffered a traumatic brain injury, which erased a period of four months from her memory, leaving her with no recollection of the incident, only unexplained bruising on her arms. She was also left with severe damage to her olfactory nerve, the cranial nerve that enables people with their sense of smell. This has left Mandy unable to even pick up the strongest odors around her.

Three months after the incident where Mandy mysteriously fell into the river, John was arrested for trying to hire a hitman to kill her.

According to Mandy Clarke and her attorney Willow Hillman, police weren't able to gather enough evidence for the prosecutor to charge John with first degree attempted murder. This resulted in his accepting a deal in which he pleaded guilty to second degree solicitation of murder.

Mandy Clarke says she refused to touch any of John's belongings, including his guns, after he was arrested, assuming detectives would look at them. She says they never came. She says she found the guns hidden in his closet, along with bullets in empty coffee canisters.

Eugene Weekly reached out to prosecutor Robert Lane to ask about the evidence and plea deal but did not receive a response. *EW* also reached out to John Clarke's attorney, Bryan Boender, with no response by press time.

"Ultimately, with the way the sentence works, on one charge, the attempted murder charge, he would have been facing a lot more time but that got dismissed," Hillman says. Hillman and Mandy Clarke, however, say they believe there was plenty of evidence that wasn't pursued or even looked at before the negotiations happened.

In Oregon, attempted murder and solicitation of murder are both Class A felonies punishable by up to

20 years in prison. John Clarke's light sentence was also affected by his lack of previous criminal history.

"Most of the people I've dealt with are in survival mode, trying to get through their day," Mandy Clarke says. "And the reality of it is, the concept of justice is lost in that environment."

Mandy Clarke says that when John gets out of prison next year, he plans on living three miles away from her RV dealership. While her restraining order is supposed to protect her for at least two years, she says the close proximity between the two of them worries her.

"I'm selling my house because there is no way for me to feel safe there anymore," she says.

In the divorce, John Clarke was able to obtain partial ownership of an RV park that they co-owned with another couple, as well as a number of vehicles that the couple once owned together.

"There is nothing I can do about it. Any of it," Mandy Clarke says. "And I have very little faith in restraining orders because if he had any respect for the law he wouldn't have done what he did in the first place."

Since John was arrested, Mandy Clarke has been the sole owner of Oregon West Enterprises with her two adult children assisting with operations. She says that the scandal of the case has made her have to fight to keep partnerships with inventory companies. Despite this all, she says she hasn't lost a single employee since John left.

As Mandy Clarke moves forward with her life she wants to make something clear: "The worst part of this is being perceived as a victim," Clarke says. "I am not a weak person, quite the contrary, actually."

A longtime, accomplished equestrian, she says she has mantras she lives by that come from her worst moments in life: "You never give up, and it's about forward motion. The thing that riding teaches you is that when you're on a nervous 2,000-pound animal, you have to have self-control, to relax your body and kick them in the gut and say, 'Get up and get forward.'"

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Strip Searching Juveniles

INCREASING NUMBERS OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS IN LANE COUNTY'S YOUTH DETENTION CENTER HAVE BEEN STRIP SEARCHED DESPITE A COURT RULING LIMITING THE PRACTICE

By Amelia Winkelman

Juvenile offenders in Lane County's youth detention center have been forced to undergo an increasing number of strip searches that advocates say violate the detainees' civil rights.

Karen Stenard, administrator of the Lane County Juvenile Lawyers Association, says she and her colleagues have only recently learned about the growing number of detainees who report having been strip searched.

"They need a very good reason to strip search," says Stenard, who's worked as a juvenile defense attorney for 25 years.

Stenard says she learned earlier this month that Youth Services, the county division that oversees the juvenile detention facility, had been operating under a blanket policy of strip searching detainees when they returned from routine in-house court hearings and visits with their attorneys.

In 2010, a U.S. District Court judge ruled that Yamhill County had violated juvenile detainees' constitutional rights by automatically subjecting them to strip searches after onsite, face-to-face meetings with attorneys.

Following that ruling, the state set clear rules about when strip searches of juvenile detainees are permitted. The *Oregon Juvenile Detention Facility Guidelines* say strip searches — officially known as "comprehensive searches" — are permitted when detainees enter the facility.

The state guidelines say strip searches are otherwise allowed only when officials have a "reasonable suspicion" that the detainee has contraband, such as a weapon or drugs, or an item that could cause harm.

"When staff search youth who are returning from court, school, another facility, visits on the premises, or who have been otherwise continuously supervised, they

do so by a pat-down, metal detector or clothing search," the guidelines say.

Stenard says she launched protests to state and county officials after learning about the practice. She says she met with county officials, including Greg Rikhoff, director of the Lane County Community Justice and Rehabilitation Services, which oversees Youth Services and the detention center.

According to Stenard, Rikhoff told her he was surprised that attorneys representing juveniles didn't know about the policy to strip search detainees "after every court appearance."

Stenard says she now believes "certain staff people were doing it [strip searches] every time and other staff people were doing it sometimes." Stenard says she has no idea how many strip searches took place without meeting the "reasonable suspicion" test.

Stenard says officials have told her that the county's own lawyers have since told Youth Services to halt the practice.

Rikhoff confirms to *Eugene Weekly* that Youth Services has stopped the practice. In an email, Rikhoff says that the county has now decided "pat down searches are sufficient and appropriate for youth returning from court or meetings with legal counsel or others."

Rikhoff also says the county is purchasing a body scanner — similar to airport security — that should be up in running in a few weeks and do away with the need for most strip searches.

He says Youth Services increased the frequency of strip searches after officials recently found banned items in youth detainees' cells. "We're certainly stepping up having found a couple of things in individuals' rooms that somehow got through," Rikhoff says. "I think it stepped up concerns, but we've been pretty consistent about the need for what we call 'comprehensive searches.'"

Patti Robb, interim manager of Youth Services, which oversees the detention facility, says the items found have included screws, pieces of glass, paperclips and other items that detainees can use to hurt others or themselves.

Robb also confirms the detention center has stopped the practice. "We're going to pause and receive training on that and then make a determination on if we need to make a change or not based on what we learn after training," Robb says. "So we wanted to give ourselves an opportunity to learn more."

But questions about the county's strip search policy remain.

State rules require that Lane County have a written policy about strip searches of juvenile detainees. Robb says the county established a policy in 2017.

EW asked for a copy of the policy, but Robb declined to make it public. Stenard also says she asked for a copy of the policy but has received nothing from county officials.

The youth facility has 16 beds and is located in the county's Juvenile Justice Center building on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard across from Autzen Stadium.

Stenard says many youth in detention have faced sexual abuse, and the very nature of strip searches — which can include examinations of a detainee's breasts, buttocks, or genitalia — can retraumatize the detainees.

These youth detainees are "doing things that they shouldn't do, but they're often like the saddest, most vulnerable people in the community," Stenard says.

"The reason I've done this work for as long as I have," she adds, "is I think kids are often treated with fewer rights and less respect than adults, which to me is the opposite of how it should be."

This story was developed in partnership with the Local Reporting Initiative of the Catalyst Journalism Project at the University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication. To learn more, visit CatalystJournalism.uoregon.edu.

slant

• **Third issue back!** And we did warn you there would be some bumps along the way! To those of you who noticed we didn't **supply the answers to the Feb. 8 crossword** in the Feb. 15 issue: Whoops! Sorry! We put them online. Readers who subscribe to our weekly newsletters got that link faster, so if you want digital updates, head on over to EugeneWeekly.com/newsletter to sign up.

• **Wondering what the latest update is on 4J Superintendent Andy Dey?** As we went to press, there was a meeting scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 21. We will update online at EugeneWeekly.com. We will

also update as to whether 4J has given us the copy of Dey's contract and his salary — public records we have been asking for for weeks. Also online, find a piece by Brenton Gicker on the case of missing Lane County resident David Bjorkman, who was last seen Jan. 30 at Fisherman's Market. And read a story about the Feb. 24 public library card fundraiser at Tsunami Books aimed at increasing youth access to library resources by providing youth who live outside Eugene city limits with free library cards.

• **CORE Eugene (Community Outreach through Radical Empowerment) has announced its new free 24 hour naloxone box in the Whiteaker.** The box contains nasal Narcan, injectable naloxone and test strips for drugs like fentanyl and xylazine. The box is at Zephyr



House at 692 Jefferson Street. If the box is running low, CORE says to call 541-870-0036 or send CORE a DM on social media.

• **The highly promoted three-point shootout between Steph**

Curry and Sabrina Ionescu Feb. 17 during the NBA's All-Star Weekend turned out to be a nothing-burger. Swish. Swish. Steph wins. Big hug. But it is better to be writing articles about shooting balls into baskets than shooting bullets into each other — the post-Super Bowl mass shooting in Kansas City that killed one woman and injured 22 others, including nine children, is just the latest in a seemingly endless stream of senseless gun violence.

• Mark your calendar for Feb. 23 to March 22 when the **Art of Bricolage show runs at Maude Kerns Art Center.** The free opening reception is 5 pm Friday, Feb. 23, and features nine Oregon artists who create work from recycled materials. Recent shows at Maude Kerns have been such good ones. We expect this will be the same.

ANTONIO HUERTA
DEMONSTRATES
CHARRO ROPE TRICKS



THE ART OF MEXICAN HORSEMANSHIP

FROM CHARRERÍA TO ROPING OFF A MULE, THE LOCAL LATINO COMMUNITY
SHOWCASES ITS HERITAGE By Camilla Mortensen

The pageantry was centered in the arena — the dancing horses, the rope tricks, the bull riding — a brass band, complete with a tuba, played in the background as members of the local Latino community gathered to show off their equine and ranch talents, and the horses themselves, and celebrate Mexican Independence Day Sept. 16, 2023.

Riders sat their mounts with a grace and ease that belied the skills needed to ask their mounts to prance in place or to tolerate a rawhide lasso being swung around them — either as a rope trick or to rope the hind legs of a steer.

At the celebration in rural Monroe that September day, it was clear who had the horsemanship skills.

“This is true for Black and Native communities, too,” says Antonio Huerta, who demonstrated his rope skills that day. “White American culture does not see or think of people of color as ‘horse people.’”

But, he adds, “There are a lot of people incredibly talented or knowledgeable about horsemanship.”

Equestrian sports tend to be elitist, he continues. “This is a white man’s discipline. It’s the Mexicans doing the hard work training the horses until they are more rideable.”

Huerta, director of Comunidad y Herencia Cultural, is a charro. *Charrería* dates back to the 1500s and is the skill and art form that involves horsemanship, working cattle and the sophisticated use of the rope.

Huerta says that *charrería*, México’s national sport (not soccer, as some might believe), started when the Spanish reintroduced horses and cattle to the American continent. He says the animals reproduced swiftly, to the point that the Spanish needed help from the Indigenous people to keep the cattle in a particular area. Previously, the Spaniards had prevented them from riding.

He says, “Out of the need of working with horses and cattle, people started to develop roping skills and moving the cattle around to the degree that it really became their passion.”

There are nine events in *charrería*, and Huerta says, “there are several disciplines that are very common within the American rodeo, such as bull riding, team roping, reining and bronc riding.”

And while the Spanish brought their attire and equipment with them, it was by necessity adapted to the landscape of México, he says. The Spanish sombrero is not as wide nor as heavy as the Mexican one “where the wide-brimmed sombrero protects from the rain and the sun.”

The Mexican community, he continues, “started using the rawhide rope because that is what was available. The outfit, too, is made from the leather of the animals.”

You may have seen Huerta in his charro outfit pictured at the Eugene Airport, at a museum or in a local library. As part of his work through Comunidad y Herencia Cultural

he does extensive outreach into the community to show Latinx youth themselves and their heritage represented in those spaces.

Huerta started doing activities with Comunidad y Herencia Cultural in 2016 and incorporated soon after as a nonprofit. The organization puts on cultural events, music and dance presentations and workshops, leatherwork workshops, and he says he is working to expand further into riding and rope trick lessons or programming. The group also goes into schools — mainly Springfield and Bethel, he says — and participates in parades throughout the state.



THE REVELRY OF THE OPENING PROCESSION ON MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY SEPT. 16, 2023



ELAW

Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide

Environmental Heroes Come to Eugene

The world's leading grassroots advocates are traveling to Eugene to work with the Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide (ELAW) to protect communities from the climate crisis and chart a greener future. They will collaborate across borders to help communities

around the globe speak out for clean air, clean water, and a healthy planet.

ELAW is hosting visitors from more than 40 countries for the 2024 ELAW Annual Meeting and side events (February 25 – 29) followed by the Public Interest Environmental Law Conference (March 1 – 3, www.pielc.org). PIELC is free and

open to the public. More than 25 ELAW partners will participate in PIELC panels to share their perspectives and expertise.

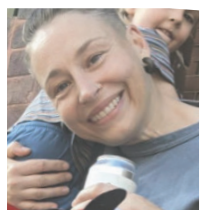
Learn more about these inspired overseas partners and the ELAW Team in the following profiles.

www.elaw.org



AUSTRALIA

Keely Boom
Executive Officer
Climate Justice
Programme



Julia Grix
Managing Lawyer
EDO Defenders
Program
Environmental
Defenders Office



Elaine Johnson
Environmental
Lawyer
Environmental
Defenders Office



BANGLADESH

Rizwana Hasan
Chief Executive
Bangladesh
Environmental
Lawyers
Association



BELGIUM

Rebecca Gerome
Associate Strategic
Litigation Officer
Open Society
Justice Initiative



BRAZIL

Tatiana Bastos
Instituto de Direito
Coletivo



**Paulo Celso
de Oliveira
(Pankararu)**
Board Member
Instituto Pro Bono



Marcos Fuchs
Executive Director
Instituto Pro Bono



**Nadia de Matos
Barros**
Associate Director
Instituto Pro Bono



**Eliésio da Silva
Vargas (Marubo)**
Legal Advisor
Union of
Indigenous
Peoples of Vale do
Javari



**Maria Judite da
Silva Balleiro
(Guajajara)**
Legal Advisor
Coordenação das
Organizações e
Articulações dos
Povos Indígenas do Maranhão



**Cristiane Soares
(Baré)**
Legal Advisor
Coordenação das
Organizações
Indígenas da
Amazônia Brasileira



**Felipe Martins
Cândido (Apurinã)**
Legal Advisor
Instituto Pupykary



**CAMEROON
Nchunu Justice
Sama**
Executive Director
Foundation for
Environment and
Development



**CANADA
Anna Johnston**
Staff Lawyer
West Coast
Environmental Law



Andrew Gage
Staff Lawyer
West Coast
Environmental Law



**CHILE
Miguel I. Fredes**
Director
Incidencia Global



**Antonia Berrios
Bloomfield**
Fiscalia del Medio
Ambiente



**CHINA
Jinmei Liu**
Director General
Friends of Nature



**COLOMBIA
Ana Lucía Maya-
Aguirre**
Director and Co-
founder
Observatory for
Marine and Coastal Governance



Isabela Figueroa
Professor of Law
University of
Magdalena



**Rosa María
Mateus P.**
Lawyer
Colectivo de
Abogados José
Alvear Restrepo



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Olivier Ndoole
Executive Secretary
Alerte
Congolaise pour
l'Environnement et les Droits de
l'Homme



**Jimmy Munguriek
Ufoy**
Permanent Secretary
Cadre de
Concertation de
la Société Civile
de l'Ituri sur les
Ressources Naturelles



Nsimba Kilembé
Victorine Bibiche
Deputy General Secretary
Centre Congolais pour le Droit du Développement Durable



Roger Mavungu Kama
Executive Secretary
Dynamique pour le Droit, la Démocratie et le Développement Durable



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
Euren Cuevas Medina
Executive Director
Instituto de Protección del Medio Ambiente



Maritza Reynoso Santos
Lawyer
Instituto de Abogados para la Protección del Medio Ambiente



EGYPT
Ahmed Elseidi
Environmental Lawyer
Elseidi Law Firm



GERMANY
Marie Bohlmann
Lawyer
Green Legal Impact Germany



Henrike Lindemann
Managing Director
Green Legal Impact Germany



GHANA
Augustine Niber
Executive Director
Center for Public Interest Law



GUINEA
Foromo Frederic Loua
Lawyer and Executive Director
Les Memes Droits pour Tous



HONDURAS
Clarisa Vega
Lawyer
Institute of Environmental Law of Honduras



INDIA
Rahul Choudhary
Trustee
Legal Initiative for Forest and Environment



Ritwick Dutta
Managing Trustee
Legal Initiative for Forest and Environment



INDONESIA
Fajri Fadhillah
Head of Pollution and Environmental Damage Control Division
Indonesian Center for Environmental Law



JAMAICA
Kournie Dixon
Legal Officer
Jamaica Environment Trust



KENYA
Emily Kinama
Litigation and Research Counsel
Katiba Institute



Mark Odaga
Environmental and Human Rights Lawyer



LIBERIA
Samwar Samzato Fallah
Staff Lawyer
Green Advocates International
Liberia



MEXICO
Carlos Asúnsolo
Research and Public Policy Director
Mexico Environmental Law Center



Aarón Siller
Mexico Environmental Law Center



Eduardo Mosqueda
Executive Director
Tsikini



Fernando Ochoa
General Director
Defensa Ambiental del Noroeste



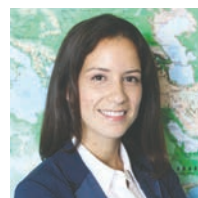
Francisco Xavier Martínez Esponda
Co-coordinator
TerraVida



Ximena Ramos Pedrueza C.
Professor
Clínica Jurídica para la Justicia Ambiental Berta Caceres



NEPAL
Sanjay Adhikari
Executive Director
Prakash Mani Sharma Academy for Public Interest Law



NETHERLANDS
Michelle Jonker-Argueta
Senior Legal Counsel Strategic Litigation
Greenpeace International



Jasper Teulings
Director Strategic Litigation
Children's Investment Fund Foundation



NICARAGUA
Bernis Cunningham
President
Centro Nicaragüense de Conservación Ambiental



NIGERIA
Prince Chima Williams
Barrister
Environmental Rights Action/
Friends of the Earth Nigeria



PERU
Cesar Gamboa
Senior Advisor
Derecho Ambiente y Recursos Naturales



PHILIPPINES
Kristine Joy Argallon
Legal and Policy Officer
Philippine Earth Justice Center, Inc



Ma. Nikka Andrea Flores Oquias
Legal and Policy Specialist
Oceana



Rea Chill Plomillo
Staff Lawyer
Upholding Life and Nature



Rose-Liza Eisma-Osorio
Senior Director for Campaigns, Legal and Policy
Oceana



Zelda Soriano
Pro Bono Executive Director
Community Legal Help and Public Interest Centre



RUSSIA
Dmitry Lisitsyn
Independent Environmental Consultant



Natalia Lisitsyna
Lawyer
Nature in Law



SENEGAL
Fatima Diallo
Executive Director
Centre de Recherche et d'Action sur les Droits Economiques, Sociaux et Culturels



SLOVAKIA
Pavol Zilincik
WWF Slovakia



SOUTH AFRICA
Wandisa Phama
Executive Director
Centre for Environmental Rights



Palesa Madi
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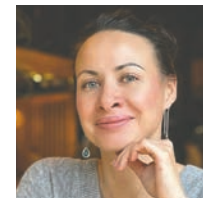
SPAIN
Mercedes Melon
Senior Lawyer
Open Society
Foundations



Samadhi Hansani
Centre for
Environmental
Justice



Sor. Rattanamanee Polkla
Executive
Coordinator/
Lawyer
Community
Resource Centre



Yelyzaveta Aleksyeyeva
Senior Lawyer
Environment
People Law



SRI LANKA
Hemantha Withanage
Centre for
Environmental
Justice



TANZANIA
Rugemeleza A.K. Nshala
Executive Director
Lawyers
Environmental
Action Team



UGANDA
Tumusiime Francis
Coordinator
Advocates for
Natural Resources
and Development



URUGUAY
Alberto Gomez Barreiro
Professor of
Environmental Law
University of the
Republic (Uruguay)



Ravindranath Dabare
Chairman
Centre for
Environmental
Justice



THAILAND
Songkrant Pongboonjun
Faculty of Law
Chiang Mai
University



UKRAINE
Olena Kravchenko
Executive Director
Environment
People Law



ZIMBABWE
Mutuso Dhlwayo
Executive Director
Zimbabwe
Environmental Law
Association

All over the world, people are calling for a greener future. People want to breathe clean air and drink clean water. They want to protect our global climate. They want their children to enjoy a clean, healthy, natural environment.

ELAW connects people across borders and helps people around the world speak with strong voices and win victories for the environment. ELAW gives local lawyers the legal and scientific tools they need to:

1. Protect our global climate.
2. Prevent pollution and challenge environmental abuses.
3. Strengthen and enforce laws protecting the environment.
4. Help citizens speak out for communities and the environment.

At ELAW, we believe that grassroots attorneys working in their home countries are key to building a sustainable future. That's why we always work with committed local partners and help them defeat efforts to harass and intimidate them.

Advocates around the world know they can call on us for the help they need. Every year, public interest lawyers call on us for help with hundreds of efforts to protect communities and the environment. By empowering grassroots lawyers and helping them stay safe, we help win victories and build a worldwide corps of strong advocates for the environment.

We all share a single planet, and we must build bridges across borders. At ELAW, we are proud to work with courageous advocates all over the world. We are thrilled to welcome these advocates to Eugene, where we will learn from them, they will inspire us, and we will work together to craft a greener future.

Bern Johnson
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ENVIRONMENTAL LAW ALLIANCE WORLDWIDE



**ELAW
GLOBAL
TEAM**

FIND THE ELAW TEAM ON PAGE 4

The ELAW office is in Eugene and many members of the ELAW Team work in that office. However, as this map illustrates, other members of the ELAW Team work remotely from spots around the world. Bringing these far-flung professionals onto the ELAW Team enables us to work more closely with lawyers around the world. We can work well in more languages and more time zones, and help build a strong, global corps of committed environmental defenders.

ELAW GLOBAL TEAM



Bern Johnson
Executive
Director
Oregon



Genee Mislang-Tomboc
Attorney
California



Dr. Rye Howard
Scientist, Public
Health
Massachusetts



Karen Guillory
Outreach
Manager
Oregon



Lori Maddox
Associate
Director
Oregon



Liz Mitchell
Attorney
Washington



Dr. Meche Lu
Scientist,
Geography and
Biochemistry,
Environmental
Monitoring Lead
Oregon



Colleen Keane
Network Support
Coordinator
Oregon



Jennifer Gleason
Law Program
Director
Oregon



Bernard Ngalim
Africa Law
Associate
Oregon



Dr. Fernanda Salinas
Scientist, Ecology
Santiago, Chile



Maggie Keenan
Communications
Director &
Fellows Program
Coordinator
Oregon



Pedro León Gutiérrez
Law Program
Associate
Director
Mexico City,
Mexico



William 'BJ' Schulte
Attorney
United States



Dr. Gilles Wendling
Scientist,
Hydrogeology
British Columbia,
Canada



Bear Berry
Program
Assistant
United States



Letícia Aleixo
Attorney
Santa Catarina,
Brazil



Alejandra Serrano Pavón
Attorney, Marine
and Coastal Lead
Mexico



Dr. Bree Yednock
Scientist, Marine
Ecology
Oregon



Zachary Dolan
Grant Finance
Manager
Oregon



Jennifer Castello
Attorney
Toulouse, France



Dr. Mark Chernaik
Science Program
Director
Oregon



Kate Holcombe
Managing
Attorney,
Defending
Defenders
Program
California



Matt Pugh
IT Coordinator
Oregon



Melissa Fourie
Attorney
Cape Town,
South Africa



Dr. Johnnie Chamberlin
Scientist,
Climate and the
Environment
California



Charis Kamphuis
Attorney,
Defending
Defenders
Program
British Columbia,
Canada



Amanda Parkes
Accounting
Manager
Oregon



Érick Kassongo
Attorney
Kinshasa,
Democratic
Republic of
Congo



Dr. Melissa Garren
Scientist, Marine
Biology
California



Luciano Coco Pastrana
Attorney,
Defending
Defenders
Program
Buenos Aires,
Argentina



Anya Mintz
Law Associate
Oregon

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AGUSTIN CISNEROS AND HIS MULE, SAMSON



Watchers of the Springfield Christmas Parade in December will have seen a mariachi band, dancers and riders on prancing horses in traditional Mexican attire make their way through the streets of Springfield. Last summer the group participated in the Roseburg Pride Parade, and in October 2023, Comunidad y Herencia Cultural won “Best in Show” in the BEAM BRiGHT Parade in downtown Eugene. Parade-goers will have also have seen local horseman Agustin Cisneros riding in traditional Mexican clothing on the horse he trained, Noodle, with his daughter Emily in *escaramuza* dress on the family’s horse, Bucky.

“We do what we do to create opportunities, especially for Latinx youth in the area who don’t have the opportunity to see themselves represented or learn about the richness of their own cultural heritage,” Huerta says. “It’s important for us to create those spaces and opportunities to engage.”

Huerta collaborates with Jessica Zapata of Eugene Arte Latino on many of the cultural events. A major one they work on is Noche Cultural in July, which Zapata says lasts from noon to 10 pm with different musicians and artists from México and other countries, traditional food from Latin America, and even a little soccer field for kids to play on. She says the event draws up to 2,000 people to Springfield’s Island Park, where Huerta says, regrettably, they cannot bring the horses, but they can show some of the rope tricks of charrería.

Zapata is a Spanish teacher at Willamette High School in Bethel, and she says that “for me, it’s really important to preserve my language, and I make sure the opportunities we present are bilingual.”

She adds, “One of the things we normally focus on is making sure everything we create is also helping the youth, who have been born here but their parents are from Latin America.”

Some of those youth may not have been able to visit the place their family is from, so much of the outreach — from Spanish lessons to guitar lessons — helps the kids be proud of their family’s heritage and culture.

“So for example,” Zapata says, “there are a lot of youth and they have watched Antonio and want to learn roping and to ride the horses, and we say, ‘OK we can make this happen.’”

And that is where 13-year-old Emily and her father come in. Cisneros learned to ride on his grandfather’s ranch in México when he was 9. His father put him on a horse and told him to take the cows out to the field — a trek that could take an hour.

Soon Cisneros had learned to ride and to rope the cattle. He now practices his skills as a horse trainer in Pleasant Hill, and shows off his roping and riding at events like the one in Monroe “just for fun.”

Daughter Emily says she thinks she started riding at age 5. Now she rides on trails, in parades and is learning the art and performance of *escaramuza*, the part of the charrería that Huerta describes as “basically a folkloric ballet on horseback.”

The mounted ballet involves choreographed numbers with eight women and girls riding at speed in sidesaddles wearing sombreros and dresses. Huerta says the performances relate to the role women played during the Mexican Revolution, protecting themselves, their homes, families, land and belongings while the men were fighting — at times they had to do it on horseback.

Her father brings Emily and Bucky to an arena in Hillsboro to practice, which she says involves both riding skills — with one leg down and the other high over a second saddle horn, “like a jockey” — and memorization of the complex patterns.

Huerta says when he is sharing about this old and rich cultural tradition, “I think about creating these spaces and opportunities where youth of color kind of

see themselves represented in both language and culture and come together and appreciate and learn about this old tradition.”

While the events of charrería show off some of the more rarified of México’s equestrian culture, Cisneros, together with his friends and extended family often gather informally to demonstrate their talents, as they did for Mexican Independence Day. This can involve a type of bull riding one would see at an event called *jaripeo* that includes the dancing horses, *caballos bailadores*, who prance and almost appear to gallop in place to the music, and *monta de toros*, men riding bulls and steers without using a hand to hold on, and wrapping up usually with a *baile*, a dance. Jaripeos take place regularly around Oregon, but Huerta says the state is host to only three recognized charrería events.

In the case of the gathering in Monroe on that warm day last fall, the goal was celebration, not competition, and instead of the tense air that can accompany a horse show or even a rodeo event, at this one the vibrant sounds of the brass instruments’ *banda* music set the tone for the revelry. Huerta, astride Bucky, showed his rope tricks. Cisneros riding his mule, Samson, participated in an informal game of *piales* in which the horseman — or in his case, mule rider — ropes the hind legs of the cows. Cisneros clarifies that once the leg is caught, they release it. The animal is not thrown to the ground.

He says it took him a year to train his mule to work cattle; back in México, where he would have been able to work with Samson every day, it would have been faster.

While the riders show off their rope tricks, their dancing horses and their talented mules, the scent of cooking food fills the air, intertwined with the distinctive sounds of the brass instruments.

Here in Lane County, Emily helps Huerta teach riding skills to fellow Latino youth who want to learn to ride horses and to rope. Her parade participation in her green *escaramuza* dress also becomes a form of outreach. “You get built up,” she says, “with the dancers and the traditional music, and I’m the only *escaramuza* and the little girls say, ‘Look at that girl,’ and are seeing a part of our culture.”

For upcoming events or to support Zapata and Huerta’s work, go to EugeneArteLatino.wordpress.com or NocheCultural.com. Events on the horizon include a performance by musician Leonel Soto in March and celebrations of El Día de Los Niños in April. The Latinx community can also find free virtual discussions with health experts on Noche Cultural’s Facebook page.

BULL RIDING IN CELEBRATION OF MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY





Photo by LifeSlice Photography

Dramatic and compelling describes this almost one-act play coming to town. **Talk Radio** opens this weekend Feb. 23 and runs through Mar. 10 at Very Little Theatre. Inspiration for this play is derived loosely from radio host Alan Berg's confrontational interviews. Picture a radio station in Cleveland, Ohio in 1987. This play explores the danger and power that come with the age of broadcast media. It's a deep-dive story about Barry Champlain (Scott Machado) talking to voices in his head and to callers. "He sort of disintegrates before our eyes as he becomes overwhelmed by all the pressure he's under," says Paul Rhoden, director of *Talk Radio*. "This is a guy who defines himself and his whole value as a human being from his relationship with his audience." With five other actors on stage and eight ensemble members taking calls, the story of one night unfolds. Callers and Champlain use mature language and discuss topics such as race, gender, drug abuse, suicide and more sensitive subject matter. Before the show, Eric Richardson will play a standup bass for half an hour with sounds of jazz and soul. For 100 minutes straight and no intermission, this crew has put their own creative spin on the play. Eric Bogosian and Tad Savinar created *Talk Radio* back in 1988. On opening night, special guest Savinar will attend the show and stay for a Q & A afterward. "I hope people would appreciate this as a contrarian work of art," Rhoden says. "It's not there to make you feel warm and fuzzy all the time. Sometimes it's to make us wrestle with our own thoughts and prejudices."

Talk Radio is 7:30 pm Friday, Feb. 23 and Saturday, Feb. 24 and 2 pm Sunday, Feb. 25 at Very Little Theatre's Stage Left, 2350 Hilyard St. Tickets are \$22 Friday and Saturday. A waitlist is available for Sunday at TheVLT.com. — Brianna Murschel

THURSDAY

FEBRUARY 22

ART/CRAFT

Claire B. Jones: Artist Talk & Reception, 2-5pm, LCC, 4000 E. 30th Ave. FREE.

Jesse Harrod: Artist Talk, 4pm, UO Lawrence Hall, Rm. 115. FREE.

Paint & Sip — Oregon Coast, 6-8pm, Art w/ Alejandro, 590 Pearl St., Ste. 104. \$45.

CIVICS

ESF Governance Review Panel Meeting, 2pm, Ln. Council of Governments, 859 Willamette., 5th floor, Buford Conference Rm.

Churchill Area Neighbors General Meeting, 6:30pm, Churchill Estates, 1919 Bailey Hill Rd.

COMEDY

Pre-Mediated Comedy w/ Monica Nevi, 8pm, 255 Madison St. \$20.

Wild Ones: Open Mic, 8-10pm, WildCraft Cider Works, 232 Lincoln St. FREE.

FILM

Barry Lyndon, 11am, 3pm & 7pm, Art House, 492 E. 13th Ave. \$8-11.

FOOD/DRINK

8th Annual Bacon, Bluegrass & Boneyard Beer Fest, 11:30am-10pm thru. Feb. 25, beergarden, 777 W. 6th Ave.

GATHERINGS

Flourish Networking Eugene, 1-2:30pm today & Thu., Feb. 29, Oregon Wine LAB, 488 Lincoln St. \$30 per month.

Queer, Trans & Disability Group, 6-7pm today & Thu., Feb. 29, Email Info@Transponder.Community for link. FREE.

Codependents Anonymous (CoDA) Meeting, 7-8pm today & Thu., Feb. 29, Wellsprings Friends School, 3590 W. 18th Ave. FREE.

Recovering Couples, 7-8:15pm today & Thu., Feb. 29, Online at Recovering-Couples.org. FREE.

Benefit for Richard Johnson, 8pm, Sam Bond's, 407 Blair Blvd. FREE to attend, don.

KIDS/FAMILY

Preschool Storytime, 10:15-10:45am today & Thu., Feb. 29, Bethel Branch of Eugene Public Library, 1990 Echo Hollow Rd. FREE.

Slime for Kids, 4:30pm, Downtown Eugene Public Library. FREE.

LECTURES/CLASSES

Advanced iREST 4-Week Meditation Series, 12:30-2pm, Eugene Yoga South, 3575 Donald St., #180. \$50.

MUSIC

JAZZ LAB ft. The Joe McFarlane Trio, smooth jazz-spirits, 6pm, The Public House, 418 A St., Spfd. N/C.

Timothy Patrick, acoustic-variety-humor, 6pm, Driftwood Shores, 88416 1st Ave, Florence. \$28 Dinner res.

Better Than a Bucket, bluegrass, 7pm, beergarden, 777 W. 6th Ave. N/C.

Concrete Delta Trio, Americana, 7pm, Mac's Restaurant & Nightclub, 1626 Willamette. N/C.

J Boog, Hawaiian reggae, 7pm, McDonald Theatre, 1010 Willamette St. \$30-50.

Eugene Symphony Orchestra: *Colors of Resonance*, 7:30pm, The Hult Ctr. \$10-72.

Remy Le Boeuf, jazz, 7:30pm, The Jazz Station, 124 W. Broadway. \$25.

Funk Jam!, 9pm today & Thu., Feb. 29, Luckey's Club, 933 Olive St. N/C.

NIGHTLIFE

Beginners Board Game Night, 5pm today & Thu., Feb. 29, Funagain Games Game Parlor, 2711 Oak St. FREE.

Karaoke w/ Jeff, 6pm today & Thu., Feb. 29, Slice Piz-

zeria & Bar, 325 Blair Blvd. FREE.

Cribbage Night, 6:30pm today & Thu., Feb. 29, Falling Sky Brewpub, 1334 Oak Alley. \$5.

Trivia Night w/ Brett, 6:30pm today & Thu., Feb. 29, Viking Brewing Co., 520 Commercial St., Unit F. FREE.

Trivia Night w/ Forest, 7pm today & Thu., Feb. 29, Gratitude Brewing, 540 E. 8th Ave. FREE.

Karaoke Thursdays, 7:30pm today & Thu., Feb. 29, Happy Hours, 645 River Rd. FREE.

OUTDOORS/RECREATION

Ninkasi Run Club, 5:30pm today & Thu., Feb. 29, The Ninkasi Better Living Rm., 155 Blair Blvd. FREE.

SPECTATOR SPORTS

College Men's Basketball: Oregon at Stanford, 8pm. More info at GoDucks.com.

THEATER

Frankenstein, 7:30-9:30pm, Cottage Theatre, 700 Village Dr., Cottage Grove. \$15-29.

Winter Shorts, 7:30pm, LCC, Blue Door Theatre, 4000 E. 30th Ave. Don.

FRIDAY

FEBRUARY 23

ART/CRAFT

Establishing a Sketchbook Practice, 1-4pm, Oregon Art Supply, 1020 Pearl St. \$120.

Paint & Sip — Colorful Elephant, 6:30-8:30pm, Art w/ Alejandro, 590 Pearl St., Ste. 104. \$45.

COMEDY

All Ducked Up: Open Mic, 5pm, Twisted Duck, 533 W. Centennial Blvd., Spfd. FREE.

FILM

2001: A Space Odyssey, 7:30pm, Art House, 492 E. 13th Ave. \$8-11.

FOOD/DRINK

Whiteaker Walking Food Tour, 1-4pm, Oakshire Public House, 207 Madison St. \$90.

GATHERINGS

Recovery Dharma Buddhist Meeting, 10-11:30am, Jesco Club, 340 Blair Blvd. FREE.

LGBTQ+ Youth Group, 4-6pm, Amazon Community Ctr., 2700 Hilyard St. FREE.

Yawn Patrol's Toastmasters Club, 6:15-7:45am, Mahonia Bldg., 120 Shelton McMurry Hwy Blvd. FREE.

KIDS/FAMILY

Family Storytime, 10:15-10:45am, Sheldon Branch of Eugene Public Library, 1566 Coburg Rd. FREE.

Kids Book Talk, 4pm, Sheldon Branch of Eugene Public Library, 1566 Coburg Rd. FREE.

LECTURES/CLASSES

Hiking the PCT w/ Bob Welch — An Obsidians Potluck & Presentation, 6:15-8:45pm, Obsidian Lodge, 2250 E. 29th Ave. Potluck.

MUSIC

Bootleg Rose, alt. folk-Americana, 6pm, Viking Brewing Co., 520 Commercial St., Unit F. N/C.

George Harrison Tribute w/ Maya Love — Benefit for Egan Warming Ctr., 6pm, Whirled Pies, 199 W. 8th Ave. \$10-20 sug. don.

Gregarius, Americana, 6:30pm, Falling Sky Brewpub, 1334 Oak Alley. N/C.

Real Gone Trio, psychorock-surf-blues, 7pm, The Public House, 418 A St., Spfd. N/C.

Skip The Millers, Common Koi, Bowl Peace & Mommy, alternative, 7pm, 255 Madison St. \$7.

Étouffée, fiddle-blues-swamp rock, 7:30pm, beergarden, 777 W. 6th Ave. N/C

Let's Misbehave, jazz, 7:30pm today & 3pm Sun., Feb. 25, The Shedd, 868 High St. \$17.75-32.

Coupe de Ville, rock, 8pm, The Embers, 1811 State Hwy. 99 N. N/C.

Inner Limits, blues-funk-rock, 8pm, Mac's Restaurant & Nightclub, 1626 Willamette. \$7.

Meow Mix, electronic-hip-hop-dance, 9pm, The Cooler Bar, 20 Centennial Lp. N/C.

Molasses & DOINK, Neo-soul-jazz-funk, 9pm, Sam Bond's, 407 Blair Blvd. \$10.

NIGHTLIFE

Karaoke w/ Lewie, 9pm, Slice Downtown, 910 Willamette. FREE.

SPECTATOR SPORTS

College Women's Basketball: Oregon at Washington, 7pm. More info at GoDucks.com.

TEENS

Stories, 4pm, Bethel Branch of Eugene Public Library. FREE.

THEATER

A Year w/ Frog & Toad, 7pm, The Wildish Theater, 630 Main St., Spfd. \$10-15.

Frankenstein, 7:30-9:30pm, Cottage Theatre, 700 Village Dr., Cottage Grove. \$15-29.

Talk Radio, 7:30pm, The Very Little Theatre, 2350 Hilyard St. \$22.

Winter Shorts, 7:30pm, LCC, Blue Door Theatre, 4000 E. 30th Ave. Don.

Grief, 8pm today & Sat., Feb. 24, Hult Ctr. \$35.50-\$65

SATURDAY

FEBRUARY 24

ART/CRAFT

Figure Art Sessions, 10am-1pm, LCC, 4000 E. 30th Ave., Studio 136 Bldg. 5. \$8 drop-in.

Paint & Sip — Lotus Pond, 3-5pm, Art w/ Alejandro, 590 Pearl St., Ste. 104. \$45.

Paint & Sip — Monet's Japanese Bridge, 6:30-8:30pm, Art w/ Alejandro, 590 Pearl St., Ste. 104. \$45.

COMEDY

A Mean Leap, 7pm, The Kind Hop, 2023 River Rd. \$10.

DRAG

Drag Takeover, 9pm, Sam Bond's, 407 Blair Blvd. \$10.

FILM

Psychedelic Film, Discussion Circle & Library Browsing, noon-2pm, EDELIC Ctr., 631 E. 19th Ave., Bldg. B. FREE.

2001: A Space Odyssey, 1pm, 4:15pm & 7:30pm, Art House, 492 E. 13th Ave. \$8-11.

The Immortals: The Wonder of the Museo Egizio, 1:30pm, Art House, 492 E. 13th Ave. \$10-12.

Wall-E, 3pm, Whiteside Theatre, 461 SW. Madison Ave., Corvallis. \$5-8.

FARMERS MARKETS

Winter Farmers Market, 10am-2pm, Farmers Market Pavilion, 85 E. 8th Ave.

FOOD/DRINK

Whiteaker Walking Food Tour, 1-4pm, Oakshire Public House, 207 Madison St. \$90.

GATHERINGS

Overeaters Anonymous, 9:30-10:30am, Unitarian Universalist Church, 1685 W. 13th Ave. FREE.

TransParent Group, 11am-noon, Theo's Coffee House, 199 W. 8th Ave., #1. FREE.

Fundraiser for Free Library Cards for Charter Schoolers & Home-Schoolers, 3-5pm, Tsunami Books, 2585 Willamette. Don.

Trans Community Support Group, 3:30-5pm, Email info@transponder.community for link. FREE.

Emerald Valley CSL: Week 4 M-GEN Sunday, 4-5:30pm, Hilyard Community Ctr., 2580 Hilyard St. FREE.

KIDS/FAMILY

Craft a Polar Bear, 10-11:30am, Sheldon Branch of Eugene Public Library, 1566 Coburg Rd. FREE.

Baby & Toddler Storytime, 10:15-10:45am, Bethel Branch of Eugene Public Library, 1990 Echo Hollow Rd. FREE.

Family Storytime, 10:15-10:45am, 11-11:30am & 11:45am-12:15pm, Downtown Eugene Public Library. FREE.

LECTURES/CLASSES

Where To Start to Love Your Heart w/ Yaakov Levine, FNTP, 11am-noon, Natural Grocers, 201 Coburg Rd. FREE.

LITERARY ARTS

Bible as Literature: Three Short Books — The Book of Ruth, Ecclesiastes & Song of Songs, 9:30am-noon, UO Baker Downtown Ctr., 975 High St. \$95-135.

MUSIC

Olem Alves, jazz, 2pm, Sarver Winery, 25600 Mayola Ln. N/C.

All Americas for Kids, choir concert, 2:30pm, Hult Ctr. \$6-12.

Honest Strangers, eclectic ensemble, 6pm, Viking Brewing Co., 520 Commercial St., Unit F. N/C.

The Jazz Symbiosis Trio, jazz-blues, 6pm, Territorial Vineyards & Wine Co., 907 W. 3rd Ave. N/C.

The SURVIVORS Band, rock-variety, 7pm, Crazy Al's Bar & Grill, 88186 4th St., Veneta. N/C.

Uncle Stumbles, '60s rock, 7pm, 255 Madison St. N/C.

Meadow Rue, bluegrass, 7:30pm, beergarden, 777 W. 6th Ave. N/C.

Torrey Newhart's Obsidian Animals w/ Thomas Barber, Jessika Smith, Jonathan Corona, Jack Radsloff, Garrett Baxter & Ken Mastrogiovanni, 7:30pm, The Jazz Station, 124 W. \$20.

Coupe de Ville, rock, 8pm, The Embers, 1811 State Hwy. 99 N. N/C.

Hot Tub HIT Machine, tub tunes, 8pm, The Wild Goat Sports Bar & Grill. N/C.

Michael Tracey & The Hitones, blues-rock-funk, 8pm, Mac's Restaurant & Nightclub, 1626 Willamette. \$8.

NIGHTLIFE

Karaoke w/ Lewie, 9pm, Slice Downtown, 910 Willamette. FREE.

SPECTATOR SPORTS

College Men's Basketball: Oregon at California, 4pm. More info at GoDucks.com.

THEATER

A Year w/ Frog & Toad, 2pm & 7pm, The Wildish Theater, 630 Main St., Spfd. \$10-15.

Frankenstein, 7:30-9:30pm, Cottage Theatre, 700 Village Dr., Cottage Grove. \$15-29.

Talk Radio, 7:30pm, The Very Little Theatre, 2350 Hilyard St. \$22.

Winter Shorts, 7:30pm, LCC, Blue Door Theatre, 4000 E. 30th Ave. Don.

SUNDAY

FEBRUARY 25

COMEDY

Come On In! Open Mic, 7:30pm, The Barn Light Bar, 924 Willamette St. FREE.

FILM

2001: A Space Odyssey, 1pm, Art House, 492 E. 13th Ave. \$8-11.

GATHERINGS

Sunday Gathering, 10:30-11:30am, The Center, 390 Vernal St. FREE.

Secret Society Magic & Illusion Show, 11am-1pm, Old Nick's Pub, 211 Washington St. \$5-15.

Last Sunday at Hope Abbey, 1-4pm, Eugene Masonic Cemetery & Hope Abbey, 25th/26th Ave & University. FREE.

Cribbage Afternoon, 2pm, Arable Brewing Co., 510 Conger St. \$5.

KIDS/FAMILY

Fairy Houses, 1-5pm, Downtown Eugene Public Library. FREE.

LECTURES/CLASSES

Make an Herbal Dream Pillow, 3pm, Downtown Eugene Public Library, 100 W. 10th Ave. FREE.

MUSIC

Esmé Quartet w/ Yekwon Sunwoo, quartet-piano, 3pm, Beall Concert Hall, 961 E. 18th Ave. \$5-50.

Belltower, string-folk-bluegrass, 4pm, beergarden, 777 W. 6th Ave. N/C.

Jazz at the Ciderhouse, 4pm, WildCraft Cider Works, 232 Lincoln St. N/C.

The Richardson Brothers Trio ft. Randy Ross on Percussion: An Unplugged Tribute to Black History Month, hip-hop-reggae, 4pm, Tsunami Books, 2585 Willamette. Don.

Mike & Carleen McCornack, singers-songwriters, 4:30pm, 255 Madison St. N/C.

EastSide Sunday Jam, 5pm, Twisted River Saloon, 1444 Main St., Spfd. N/C.

Shamrock Jam, 6pm, The Pint Pot Pub, 195 E. 17th Ave. N/C.

NIGHTLIFE

RWMcCabe Studios: Open Mic, 4pm, Coldfire Brewing Co., 263 Mill St. FREE.

Open Mic, 6pm, The Public House, 418 A St., Spfd. FREE.

Karaoke w/ Jeff, 6pm, Slice Pizzeria & Bar, 325 Blair Blvd. FREE.

Musical Speed Dating, 7pm, The Big Dirty, 844 Olive St. \$5.

Karaoke Sundays, 7:30pm, Happy Hours, 645 River Rd. FREE.

The Muse Collective, 8:30pm, Sam Bond's, 407 Blair Blvd. \$9.

OUTDOORS/RECREATION

Yoga + Beer, 10:30-11:30am, The Public House, 418 A St., Spfd. \$25.

Eugene Community Ecstatic Dance & Movement, 11am-1pm, Eugene Community Ecstatic Dance, 246 Ivanhoe. FREE.

SPECTATOR SPORTS

College Women's Basketball: Oregon at Washington State, noon. More info at GoDucks.com.

SPIRITUAL

Generosity & Giving, 10-11:30am, Baha'i Ctr., 1458 Alder St. FREE.

THEATER

A Year w/ Frog & Toad, 2pm, The Wildish Theater, 630 Main St., Spfd. \$10-15.

Talk Radio, 2pm, The Very Little Theatre, 2350 Hilyard St. \$22.

Winter Shorts, 2pm, LCC, Blue Door Theatre, 4000 E. 30th Ave. Don.

Frankenstein, 2:30-4:30pm, Cottage Theatre, 700 Village Dr., Cottage Grove. \$15-29.

MONDAY

FEBRUARY 26

CIVICS

Eugene City Council Work Session, 5:30pm. Email

NVenhuda@eugene-or.gov for more info.

Eugene City Council Meeting, 7:30pm, 101 W. 10th Ave.

COMEDY

Open Mic w/ Seth Milstein, 8-10pm, Slice Pizzeria & Bar, 325 Blair Blvd. FREE.

FILM

The Immortals: The Wonder of the Museo Egizio, 6pm, Art House, 492 E. 13th Ave. \$10-12.

2001: A Space Odyssey, 7:30pm, Art House, 492 E. 13th Ave. \$8-11.

LECTURES/CLASSES

Robert Trafford: Forensic Architecture: Art & Activism Against State Violence, 4pm, UO Lawrence Hall, Rm.115. FREE.

NIGHTLIFE

Beats & Boards, 6:30pm, beergarden, 777 W. 6th Ave. FREE.

Cribbage Night, 6:30pm, Coldfire Brewing Co., 263 Mill St. \$3.

Open Mic, 6:30pm, Houndstooth Public House, 1795 W. 6th Ave. FREE.

Trivia Mondays, 6:30pm, The Public House, 418 A St., Spfd. FREE.

RECREATION

Yoga for a Healthy Back Series, 10-11:15am, Eugene Yoga South, 3575 Donald St., #180. \$90 for 6 sessions.

SPIRITUAL

Mindful Integration & Breathwork w/ PSILO Temple, 7-9pm, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1300 Pearl St. FREE.

TEENS

Study Help, 4-6pm, Downtown Eugene Public Library. FREE.

TUESDAY

FEBRUARY 27

ART/CRAFT

Winter Show, 11am-4pm, Studio 7 Art Gallery, 87230 Central Rd.

Craft a Scrap Rug, 6:15pm, Bethel Branch of Eugene Public Library, 1990 Echo Hollow Rd. FREE.

Figure Art Sessions, 6:15-9pm, New Zone Gallery, 110 E. 11th Ave. \$8 drop-in.

GATHERINGS

QTBIPOC Group, 6-7pm, Email info@transponder.community for the link. FREE.

KIDS/FAMILY

Baby Storytime, 10:15am, Downtown Eugene Public Library. FREE.

Toddler Storytime, 11am & 11:45am, Downtown Eugene Public Library. FREE.

Tweens Collage Creating, 4:30pm, Downtown Eugene Public Library. FREE.

LECTURES/CLASSES

Be Writing, 9:15-11:45am, Wordcrafters, 438 Charnelton St., Ste. 102. \$3.

Living w/ Memory Loss Class, 10am-noon, Waterford Grand, 600 Waterford Way. \$100.

Releasing w/ Writing, 11:30am-12:30pm, Trauma Healing Project, 631 E. 19th Ave., Bldg. B. \$5-15.

Sips of Happiness Mindfulness, 1-2pm, Trauma Healing Project, 631 E. 19th Ave., Bldg. B. \$15.

Johnston Lecture, 4-6:30pm, UO 100 Willamette Hall, 1371 E. 13th Ave. FREE.

LITERARY ARTS

The Big Read Book Discussion, 5-7pm, Spfd. Public Library, 225 5th St., Spfd. FREE.

TransPonder Book Club, 5-6pm, Email Info@Transponder.Community for link. FREE.

MUSIC

Valentines for Viola, string-instrumental, 7:30pm, Aasen-Hull Hall, 961 E. 18th Ave. UO students FREE w/ ID, Gen. Adm. \$10.

Sam Bond's Garage Banned, 8pm, Sam Bond's, 407 Blair Blvd. N/C.

NIGHTLIFE

Eugene Chess Club Night, 6pm, The Bier Stein, 1591 Willamette. FREE.

Karaoke w/ Jeff, 6pm, Slice Pizzeria & Bar, 325 Blair Blvd. FREE.

Bingo w/ Ty Connor, 6:30pm, The Public House, 418 A St., Spfd. FREE.

Killer Trivia Night, 7pm, Killer Burger, 50 W. Broadway. FREE.

Trivia Night, 7pm, The Ninkasi Better Living Rm., 155 Blair Blvd. FREE.

Trivia Tuesdays, 7pm, beergarden, 777 W. 6th Ave. FREE.

Karaoke w/ Jeff, 9pm, John Henry's, 881 Willamette. FREE.

RECREATION

Zoom Tai Chi-inspired Active Movements, 1-1:45pm, Online at WillametteValley-Massage.com. \$8.



Photo by Derick Smith

Heavy synth-pop meets dystopian electronic rock when **Ministry and Gary Numan with Front Line Assembly** perform at McDonald Theatre Feb. 29. The band Ministry began in 1981 and through the years has developed a harsher and more stylized sound. *Twitch*, *The Land of Rape and Honey* and *The Mind Is A Terrible Thing To Taste* are just a few of their early popular albums released in the '80s. Ministry has received six Grammy nominations and continues to produce new albums such as *Moral Hygiene* in 2021. March 1 dates the release of Ministry's newest Album *HOPIMUM-FORTHEMASSES*. A few songs are already out, including "B.D.E." "Goddamn White Trash" and "Just Stop Oil." Gary Numan has rocked on since the '70s. He led the band Tubeway Army and produced the 1979 *Replicas* album, which reached the top charts in the U.K. Riding the solo train, Numan's sound has included jazz and funk. The worldwide hit "Cars" has stayed popular since it was released in 1979 with its android-like singing: "Here in my car/ I feel safest of all/ I can lock all my doors/ It's the only way to live in cars." Most recently, Numan's 2021 *Intruder* album consists of the songs "Betrayed," "The Gift" and "I Am Screaming." One night only, timeless artists play their funky craft.

Ministry and Gary Numan with Front Line Assembly perform 7 pm Feb. 29 at McDonald Theatre, 1010 Willamette St. General admission tickets are \$45 and 21+ balcony tickets are \$60 — Brianna Murschel

SPIRITUAL

Sound Meditation, 7-8pm, Eugene Yoga South, 3575 Donald St., #180. \$25-67.50.

WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 28

ART/CRAFT

Figure Art Sessions, 6:15-9pm, New Zone Gallery, 110 E. 11th Ave. \$8 drop-in.

CIVICS

Eugene City Council Work Session, noon, Email NVenhuda@eugene-or.gov for more info.

FILM

2001: A Space Odyssey, 1pm, 4:15pm & 7:30pm, Art House, 492 E. 13th Ave. \$8-11.

Indiana Jones & the Temple of Doom, 7pm, Whiteside Theatre, 461 SW. Madison Ave., Corvallis. \$5-8.

GATHERINGS

We/Us/Ours, 6-8pm, Public House, 418 A St., #4606, Spfd. FREE.

KIDS/FAMILY

Sensory Storytime, 4:30pm, Downtown Eugene Public Library. FREE.

LECTURES/CLASSES

Talk Time: Conversational English, 4:30-5:30pm, Downtown Eugene Public Library. FREE.

Triple P Discussion Group: Dealing w/ Disobedience, 5-6:30pm, Parenting Now, 86 Centennial Lp. FREE.

MUSIC

Jammin' w/ the Pros, 7pm, The Jazz Station, 124 W. Broadway. \$5.

Open Blues Jam w/ Dave Roberts, 7pm, Twisted Duck, 533 W. Centennial Blvd., Spfd. N/C.

Paul Biondi & Friends, jazz, 7pm, Mac's Restaurant &

Nightclub, 1626 Willamette. N/C.

Skid Row & Buckcherry, heavy metal, 7pm, McDonald Theatre, 1010 Willamette. \$39.50-59.50.

Randy Napoleon: The Cole School, classic-guitar, 7:30pm, The Shedd, 868 High St. \$9.50-33.

NIGHTLIFE

Open Mic, 5pm, Mulligan's Pub, 2841 Willamette. FREE.

Klassy Karaoke, 6pm, 255 Madison St. \$10.

Trivia w/ Rob & Lorraine, 6pm, Hop Valley Brewing Co., 990 W. 1st Ave. FREE.

Bingo Wednesdays, 7pm, beergarden, 777 W. 6th Ave. FREE.

SPECTATOR SPORTS

College Men's Basketball: Oregon vs. Oregon State, 8pm, Matthew Knight Arena. Tickets at GoDucks.com.

SPIRITUAL

Eugene Sound Bath w/ PSILO Temple, 6:30-9pm, The Hybrid, 941 W. 3rd Ave. FREE for members, \$25 for non-members.

TEENS

Animanga Club, 4:30pm, Downtown Eugene Public Library. FREE.

THEATER

The Triplets of Belleville, 7:30pm, Hult Ctr. \$27-37.

THURSDAY

FEBRUARY 29

COMEDY

Quackenbush d'Improv, 9pm, Old Nick's Pub, 211 Washington St. FREE.

DANCE

CINDERELLA: The 60's Rock Opera, 7:30pm, Hult Ctr. \$15-22.

FILM

2001: A Space Odyssey, 1pm, 4:15pm & 7:30pm, Art House, 492 E. 13th Ave. \$8-11.

FOOD/DRINK

Thursday Tasting: 2 Towns Ciderhouse, 5-7pm, The Bier Stein, 1591 Willamette St. FREE samples.

GATHERINGS

Leap for the Long Tom, 6-8pm, The Long Tom Grange, Ferguson Rd., Junction City. FREE.

LECTURES/CLASSES

February Write Club for Grown-Ups: How to Write Humor, 6-8pm, Wordcrafters, 438 Charnelton St., Ste. 102. \$69.

MUSIC

Ministry & Gary Numan, synth-pop-dystopian electronic-rock, 6pm, McDonald Theatre, 1010 Willamette. \$45-60.

Timothy Patrick, acoustic-variety-humor, 6pm, Driftwood Shores, 88416 1st Ave., Florence. \$20.

The Elena Leona Project, funk, 7pm, beergarden, 777 W. 6th Ave. N/C.

The Joanne Broh Trio, blues-R&B-funk, 7pm, Mac's Restaurant & Nightclub, 1626 Willamette. N/C.

Eugene Hard Bop Collective w/ Dave Bender, Scott Mitchell, Shane Allen, Christoph Greiner & Paul Slate, jazz, 7:30pm, The Jazz Station, 124 W. Broadway. \$20.

SPECTATOR SPORTS

College Women's Basketball: Oregon vs. California, 7pm, Matthew Knight Arena. Tickets at GoDucks.com.

THEATER

PYGMALION, 6:30-8:30pm, Sheldon Oaks Retirement, 2525 Cal Young Rd. FREE.

Haunting at the Overlook Hotel, 9:30pm, Art House, 492 E. 13th Ave. \$10.

dance

A Rockin' Cinderella Story

BALLET AND FAIRYTALES UNITE WITH '60S JUKEBOX TUNES

By Brianna Murschel

Rock and roll takes on a new challenge when ballet tells the story of a classic fairytale. Once upon a time, a young girl is left with her wicked stepmother and bratty stepsisters. Sweeping and scrubbing floors became her life along with making friends with rodents. One night, her fairytale godmother drizzled her magic through the air, and she transformed the girl into a princess wearing a powder blue ball gown and glass slippers who falls in love and dances the night away with Prince Charming.

Now this fairytale is reimagined with professional ballet dancers and rockin' billboard hits. Ballet Fantastique presents *CINDERELLA: The '60s Rock Opera* Feb. 29 through March 3 at the Hult Center. That romanticized night with Prince Charming turns into a prom weekend where the doo-wop, twist and mashed potato dances fill the stage. Cinderella, now Cindy, becomes rebellious and embraces her love for rock and roll, defying all odds.

Cindy "needs the help of her friends and her community to create more out of her life," says Hannah Bontrager, one of Ballet Fantastique's choreographers and producers. "To me, there's something really powerful in the story about having someone show up for you and say, 'You deserve more, and being able to believe that for yourself.'"

The production team had a vision for the musical ambiance. The Beatles and The Supremes make a comeback with Shelley James and The Agents of Unity Band mixing

up rock classics with their own twist. "They bravely took the project on after some convincing, and they knocked it out of the park," says Bontrager. "I really dare anyone in the audience not to want to sing along."

Since 2011, Agents of Unity often plays as a quartet with James and her husband Callan Coleman. As the band evolves, musicians and friends are brought in to perform. They are two "longtime married musical couples and happen to be bffs, raising our kids, enjoying life," James writes in an email. The artists are also members of the Satin Love Orchestra while additionally playing in separate bands with separate genres and styles. Usually, the band performs '80s rock and pop while also covering favorites from the decades. Agents of Unity is "adaptable and interchangeable to different kinds of styles and flare flavors," James says.

For this particular show, Agents of Unity will expand to an eight-person band with a second guitarist, Tom Teutsch, and drummer Tim Donahue. Marisa Frantz and Eva Coleman are added as vocals. Eva is James' and Coleman's 14-year-old daughter and is taking the stage with the band for the first time. "She is so excited and this is very special for us," James writes. With 16 classic Billboard hits to cover such as "Big Girls Don't Cry" by the Jersey Boys, "You Don't Own Me" by Lesley Gore and "He's So Fine" by The Chiffons, the band has created its own unique arrangements.

Ballet Fantastique electrifies stories intertwined with

classical ballet and live music. It's a "bold new renegade ballet theater," Ballet Fantastique's website states. The company first premiered this show in 2012 and performed it in 2015. This will be its third complete performance with updated comedy, props and an influx of international dancers. "We're pretty psyched to be doing this collaboration for the third time," James says. "We all just love music. We love to bless our town."

A fairytale wouldn't be complete without a family affair. And that is just what this is. Bontrager's sister Ashley Bontrager stars as Cindy next to her husband Gustavo Ramirez, who plays Prince Charming. "That's a fun opportunity for them to bring that chemistry alive on stage as well," Bontrager says. As the artistic director, their mother, Donna Marisa Bontrager, helps produce the show.

CINDERELLA: The '60s Rock Opera creatively twists the famous fairytale in numerous ways. Look out for the differences such as a fairy godfather, a 1960s hot pink convertible Corvette and more. "We're adding a little bit of extra magic in terms of some bells and whistles that we have the capacity to do now as a company that we maybe didn't have 12 years ago, when we were first starting out," Bontrager says.

CINDERELLA: The '60s Rock Opera is 7:30 pm Feb. 29, March 1, March 2 and 2:30 pm March 3 at The Hult Center, 1 Eugene Center. Tickets start at \$22 for Feb. 29 through March 1 and start at \$32 March 2.



HANNAH BONTRAGER AS CINDY Photo by Stephanie Urso

FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

BY ROB BREZSNY

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19): In my astrological estimation, the coming weeks will be an ideal time for you to declare amnesty, negotiate truces and shed long-simmering resentments. Other recommended activities: Find ways to joke about embarrassing memories, break a bad habit just because it's fun to do so, and throw away outdated stuff you no longer need. Just do the best you can as you carry out these challenging assignments; you don't have to be perfect. For inspiration, read these wise words from poet David Whyte: "When you forgive others, they may not notice, but you will heal. Forgiveness is not something we do for others; it is a gift to ourselves."

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20): Many of you Tauruses have a robust capacity for doing diligent, effective work. Many of you also have a robust capacity for pursuing sensual delights and cultivating healing beauty. When your mental health is functioning at peak levels, these two drives to enjoy life are complementary; they don't get in each other's way. If you ever fall out of your healthy rhythm, these two drives may conflict. My wish for you in the coming months is that they will be in synergistic harmony, humming along with grace. That's also my prediction: I foresee you will do just that.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20): Many people choose wealthy entertainers and celebrity athletes for their heroes. It doesn't bother me if they do. Why should it? But the superstars who provoke my adoration are more likely to be artists and activists. Author Rebecca Solnit is one. Potawatomi biologist and author Robin Wall Kimmerer. The four musicians in the Ukrainian band DahkaBrakha. Poet Rita Dove and novelist Haruki Murakami. My capacity to be inspired by these maestros seems inexhaustible. What about you, Gemini? Who are the heroes who move you and shake you in all the best ways? Now is a time to be extra proactive in learning from your heroes — and rounding up new heroes to be influenced by.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22): Your homework assignment is to work on coordinating two issues that are key to your life's purpose. The first of these issues is your fervent longing to make your distinctive mark on this crazy, chaotic world. The second issue is your need to cultivate sweet privacy and protective self-care. These themes may sometimes seem to be opposed. But with even just a little ingenious effort, you can get them to weave together beautifully. Now is a good time to cultivate this healing magic.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22): If you don't recognize the face in the mirror right now, that's a good thing. If you feel unfamiliar feelings rising up in you or find yourself entertaining unusual longings, those are also good things. The voice of reason may say you should be worried about such phenomena. But as the voice of mischievous sagacity, I urge you to be curious and receptive. You are being invited to explore fertile possibilities that have previously been unavailable or off-limits. Fate is offering you the chance to discover more about your future potential. At least for now, power can come from being unpredictable and investigating taboos.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEPT. 22): I invite you to study the fine art of sacred intimacy in the coming weeks. Life's rhythms will redound in your favor as you enjoy playing tenderly and freely with the special people you care for. To aid you in your efforts, here are three questions to ponder. 1. What aspects of togetherness might flourish if you approach them with less solemnity and more fun? 2. Could you give more of yourself to your relationships in ways that are purely enjoyable, not done mostly out of duty? 3. Would you be willing to explore the possibility that the two of you could educate and ripen each other's dark sides?

LIBRA (SEPT. 23-OCT. 22): Creativity teacher Roger von Oech tells how bandleader Count Basie asked a club owner to fix his piano. It was always out of tune. A few weeks later, the owner called Basie to say everything was good. But when Basie arrived to play, the piano still had sour notes. "I thought you said you fixed it!" Basie complained. The owner said, "I did. I painted it." The moral of the story for the rest of us, concludes von Oech, is that we've got to solve the right problems. I want you Libras to do that in the coming weeks. Make sure you identify what really needs changing, not some distracting minor glitch.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21): Most of us have received an inadequate or downright poor education about love and intimate togetherness. Given how much misinformation and trivializing propaganda we have absorbed, it's amazing any of us have figured out how to create healthy, vigorous relationships. That's the bad news, Scorpio. The good news is that you are cruising through a sustained phase of your astrological cycle when you're far more likely than usual to acquire vibrant teachings about this essential part of your life. I urge you to draw up a plan for how to take maximum advantage of the cosmic opportunity. For inspiration, here's poet Rainer Maria Rilke: "For one human being to love another human being: that is perhaps the most difficult task entrusted to us, the ultimate task, the final test and proof, the work for which all other work is merely preparation." (Translation by Stephen Mitchell.)

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21): The myths and legends of many cultures postulate the existence of spirits who are mischievous but not malevolent. They play harmless pranks. Their main purpose may be to remind us that another world, a less material realm, overlaps with ours. And sometimes, the intention of these ethereal tricksters seems to be downright benevolent. They nudge us out of our staid rhythms, mystifying us with freaky phenomena that suggest reality is not as solid and predictable as we might imagine. I suspect you may soon have encounters with some of these characters: friendly poltergeists, fairies, ghosts, sprites, or elves. My sense is that they will bring you odd but genuine blessings.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19): Some studies suggest that less than half of us have best friends. Men are even less likely to have beloved buddies than the other genders do. If you are one of these people, the coming weeks and months will be an excellent time to remedy the deficiency. Your ability to attract and bond with interesting allies will be higher than usual. If you do have best friends, I suggest you intensify your appreciation for and devotion to them. You need and deserve companions who respect you deeply, know you intimately, and listen well. But you've got to remember that relationships like these require deep thought, hard work, and honest expressions of feelings!

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18): Among all the zodiac signs, you Aquarians are among the best at enjoying a bird's-eye perspective on the world. Soaring high above the mad chatter and clatter is your birthright and specialty. I love that about you, which is why I hardly ever shut up in your direction, "Get your ass back down to earth!" However, I now suspect you are overdue to spend some quality time here on the ground level. At least temporarily, I advise you to trade the bird's-eye view for a worm's-eye view. Don't fret. It's only for a short time. You'll be aloft again soon.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20): In old Hawaii, the people loved their deities but also demanded productive results. If a god stopped providing worshipers with what they wanted, they might dismiss him and adopt a replacement. I love that! And I invite you to experiment with a similar approach in the coming weeks. Are your divine helpers doing a good job? Are they supplying you with steady streams of inspiration, love and fulfillment? If not, fire them and scout around for substitutes. If they are performing well, pour out your soul in gratitude.

Homework: What do you want to do but have not been doing it — for no good reason? Newsletter. FreeWillAstrology.com.

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CHECK OUT EXPANDED WEEKLY AUDIO HOROSCOPES AND DAILY TEXT MESSAGE HOROSCOPES.

SAVAGE LOVE

BY DAN SAVAGE



I'm off this week. Please enjoy this column that originally ran in December of 2014. — Dan

What is your stance on maintenance sex? I'd never thought about the issue until reading Amy Poehler's new memoir. I didn't find anything she said controversial and was surprised when this quote blew up in the feminist blogosphere: "You have to have sex with your husband occasionally, even though you're exhausted. Sorry." I'd never realized many people firmly believe one should have sex with their partner only when they are in the mood! Some articles even made it sound like maintenance sex is a form of nonconsensual sex. I have sex with my husband pretty often when I'm not in the mood. He would prefer sex every day, and I'm more of an every-other-day or twice-a-week girl. I'd say about 25 percent of the time we are having sex, I am doing it for maintenance purposes. I always enjoy it and I get off the majority of the time, but I don't always go in wanting it or needing it. Is this wrong? Am I not the feminist I thought I was?

— Maintenance Sex Supporter

I'm pro maintenance sex, MSS.

Sometimes, I need to sex my husband when I'm not feeling it; sometimes he needs to sex me when he's not feeling it. But maintenance sex is not the same thing as enthusiastic sex. The person asking for maintenance sex — the horny partner who's being indulged/milked/sexed by the non-horny partner — shouldn't expect mind-blowing, toe-curling, sheet-shredding sex. Maintenance sex is mellow sex, low-impact sex, low-stress sex, it's sex that requires minimal effort, and it's likely to be non-penetrative sex — and gratitude is the only appropriate response.

Another important note: Being pro maintenance sex doesn't obligate a person to have sex whenever their partner wants it. Proponents and practitioners of maintenance sex still get to say no. There's a difference between indulging your partner when you're not fully feeling it — when you could take it or leave it — and forcing yourself to have sex (or being guilted/pressured to have sex) when you're exhausted, sick, angry or just unable to go/blow there.

And as you've discovered, MSS, and I can also attest, sometimes you go into sex "not wanting or needing it" and soon you're enjoying it, too, e.g., you weren't really in the mood when you started but you were in the mood before you finished. Those are the times when low-stress maintenance sex turns into mind-blowing sex. I would hate to think of how much great sex I would've missed if my feminist principles didn't allow for maintenance sex.

I've recently discovered that I am a panty sniffer — though, since I'm a gay man, maybe I'm a briefs breather? The smell gets me hard and gets me off. I discovered this when a fuck buddy left his shorts behind, and for the next few days I jerked off sniffing his shorts. That brings me to the young millennial techie guys at my work. They are fucking slobs, and they're always leaving their underwear and socks on the floor of the company's gym in our office. The janitor picks them up and puts them in a lost-and-found bin. I started checking the bin, and nothing was being removed. No one ever claimed their shorts. So, I started taking a pair every now and then. At home, I fantasize about who they belong to, and when I'm done with them, I just toss them. First question: Am I stealing? I assume the guys aren't missing them, since they've been in the bin for a week or more. Second question: Have I become one of those perverted panty sniffers from those old "Chester the Molester" comics?

— Singleton Now Inhaling Funky Funk

First answer: technically, yes. But a case could be made that you're reusing and recycling. If there were a Green Building Certification program for kinks, SNIFF, yours would qualify.

Second answer: "Chester the Molester" was a disgusting comic strip about a guy, Chester, "who was interested in sexually molesting women and prepubescent girls," according to my old friend Wikipedia. This vile comic strip, which ran in *Hustler* in the 70s and 80s (because, of course it did), made child rape look like harmless and hilarious fun. Dwaine Tinsley, the creator of the strip, wound up going to prison for molesting his daughter — and I'm guessing his kid didn't experience being raped by her father as harmless or hilarious.

Since you are not interested in prepubescent boys, SNIFF, I don't think you're a pervert in the "Chester the Molester" mold. But a case could be made that your actions have a whiff of the nonconsensual about them — your co-workers would most likely object to how you're reusing and recycling their abandoned underpants — and, if you want to be scrupulously ethical, you should probably knock it off. There are plenty of guys selling their used underwear and jocks online, from college athletes to porn stars, and if you work at a place with a private gym, SNIFF, you can afford to buy a few pairs.

Vanilla straight guy here. As a fellow Washingtonian, I feel proud to live in a state that was among the first to legalize marriage equality by a popular majority vote of the people. I avidly follow the NFL and eat fried bologna sandwiches and do lots of other manly things. However, I have always loved musical theater. Whenever I go to New York, I have to see at least two or three big shows. My question: Is it socially acceptable for me to good-naturedly say, "I'm totally gay for musical theater"? Or is it a slur that I shouldn't say, no matter how playful or well-intended?

— The Cautious Joker

When someone says, "that's so gay," but means, "that's so stupid," they're being homophobic. Obviously. But a straight guy who says he's gay for musicals isn't saying he's stupid for them, TCJ, he's saying, "I love something that many gay men are passionate about — and I'm not talking about cock." Not all gay men are passionate about musical theater, of course, just as not all straight men are passionate about football. But a man with a passion for musical theater is more likely to be gay; at the very least that man will be comfortable around gay people and respect gay people for their deep knowledge of the art form. I've heard gay guys who avidly follow the NFL describe themselves as straight for football. Likewise, a man with a passion for football is more likely to be straight.

Your saying, "I'm gay for musical theater," or a gay guy saying, "I'm straight for football," amounts to a humorous acknowledgment that the majority of people interested in musicals or football are gay or straight, respectively. In neither case is it an insult or a put-down. But while I think you can continue to say that you're gay for musicals, TCJ, some gay men (or some of our more annoying "allies") may take offense. You don't have to pay attention to those people — they're just super gay for taking offense.

I'm a vegetarian married to a meat eater. I thought the compromise you suggested to a vegetarian wondering how to make it work with a meat eater — "the meat eater agrees to keep a meat-free home; the vegetarian agrees to keep a Morrissey-free home" — wasn't helpful. But you were probably kidding, right? Here's the correct answer: The meat eater agrees to allow the vegetarian to be vegetarian (no pressure to eat meat, using vegetable stock when cooking); the vegetarian agrees to allow the meat eater to eat meat (no bitching about meat in the fridge or on their plate). Thanks for the otherwise great column!


— Very Enthusiastically GGG

Thanks for sharing, VEGGG.


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